TRANSCRIPT—Lanning Sisters

Fairview Community History Project

Interviewees: Lou Ann Lanning and Jane Lanning Lewis

Interviewer: Reagan Booth

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Were you both born in Fairview?

Jane Lanning Lewis: I was born in Buncombe County. Asheville.

What were you guys' parents' names and where were they born?

JLL: Julian Mack Lanning, and I assume Buncombe County. And my mother was born in Buncombe County, Mary Lytle Lanning.

What were your grandparents' names, and were they born here, too?

Lou Ann Lanning: Our dad's parents were Mack Lanning and Maude Peek Lanning, and as far as I know they were born in Buncombe County. And my mother's parents were Emory Lytle and Mary Harris Lytle, and I assume they were born in Buncombe County, too.

What type of work did your parents do?

JLL: Our mother was a homemaker. She stayed home and took care of everything, and our dad was a salesman. He worked for a couple of different companies, and he was a salesman.

What companies did he work for?

JLL: He worked for a company called Colonial Bread Company, which then changed to Rainbow Bread Company, I think. The longest position was with Asheville Packing Company.

He sold to restaurants, hospitals, institutional type things, all over Western North Carolina, basically. Maybe not way up northwest, but around several counties, yeah.

What do you guys do, or did?

LAL: I work for the VA, right now, as a coder for the VA. I've always been in the medical profession, secretarial, clerical type of work.

JLL: And I retired from Bell Sales, telecommunications.

My grandma worked at the VA. She was a nurse's assistant. So where have your guys lived in Fairview?

JLL: We lived on Number Nine Road, most of my life,that I can remember, just over in Fairview, and I now live on Gap Creek Road in Fairview.

LAL: And I live on number 9, south of Emmas Grove Road

You all still live there?

Sisters: Yes.

So, you've always been a resident here. Do you know what year your house was built? Could you describe your houses to me, and stuff around your house, the neighborhood?

LAL: The original house that my grandfather, my dad's father built in the 1890s. It was just a two-story farmhouse, five rooms in it. They did a lot of farming and raising cows and things like that. In the neighborhood growing up, most of it was family—aunts, uncle, cousins, grandparents. His father moved up into what we call the holler. And they farmed up there and raised tobacco. It was a dirt road to start off with, and it was mostly family that lived on the road and in the community. Which of course, now it's not that way.

JLL: There was actually so few cars going up and down that road, number nine road, you could almost tell by the sound of the vehicle who was coming, who was there.

LAL: Now the original farmhouse, in 2005 my dad passed away, and my mother and I, because the heating was basically just wood. We had some oil heat. But we were physically not able to do that, so we have torn the old house down. And I set up a doublewide on my old home property.

JLL: So, I lived there until I was married at twenty-one, when we moved to Gap Creek Road.

LAL: Which was our mother's land

JLL: Our mother gave that to us, it was a two-acre piece of her family's property on Gap Creek Road. That's a Lytle property.

And was that farmland, too?

JLL: It was then, and it is somewhat now. But not as much, it is much more development.

It was just family, for the most part. Was there any farm animals, chickens, cows?

Sisters: Oh yeah.

Are there any favorite memories?

JLL: I think what I remember a lot is that we could literally walk safely from our house to our uncle's house, to my daddy's sister's house, over to my aunt's house and up the mountain to our grandparents. I do remember that our house, all of the kids loved to be there, because mother was home, the other two mothers worked, so we always had extra people at our house. And that was a very pleasant memory. And it wasn't just relatives, it was friends. What I'm trying to say basically is that most of the time my mother didn't know how many people she was

going to have for dinner. Of course, it was supper back then. So that was a good memory. We squabbled and played and it was just great growing up there.

LAL: There's a hayfield out besides the house. That's where we all gathered, cousins and neighborhood kids, and we played ball. We played football, we played baseball. I mean, that's all we had, we didn't have tv and all this other stuff. That's what we did. I can remember having an outhouse, probably the first six or seven years of my life before we ever got a bathroom in. And having to go through the fence, because the outhouse was in the pasture. The bull or the cows didn't like you in the outhouse or whatever. We have a lot of good memories of roaming all over the community. Ride your bike everywhere. You felt safe and comfortable. You could eat at everybody's house when you went. Supper two or three times. A lot of good memories of growing up there.

JLL: Played pranks on each other.

Now we're getting into the farm stuff. You said you grew tobacco. Was that the main thing?

LAL: Our grandfather grew the tobacco—

JLL: I think that was the main cash—they grew corn, vegetables, fruit. We made molasses. They grew sugar cane.

LAL: We killed hogs, we killed cows. That's how we had our food. I can remember one time the tobacco was ready to be staked. When it came to that point in the process, everybody was there to help, even the kids. And they had to grade the tobacco. We hung the tobacco in the barn to dry. The whole family was in on this process. When we killed hogs or cows, the whole family was in on the process.

JLL: Our grandfather had a smokehouse, and that's how he. They made a mixture of sugar and salt, spices, rub on the hams,

LAL: That was mainly our part, the kids' job was to rub the hams and stuff like that.

JLL: .. and wrap it in a cheesecloth, and hang it in the smoke house, and it was good. It sounds not like fun, but it was very good.

Sounds like it would taste good.

JLL: The whole thing. The working thing, it was not—I'm sure we complained—it was a good place to grow up.

Did any farming methods change through the years?

LAL: Well after a certain point in time, I guess when our grandfather got up to a certain age, he didn't do the tobacco anymore. It really started getting regulated on how much you could have and that type of thing, and plus his age, too. We began to have things like tractors instead of using mules and plows, we had tractors that would make things a little easier, plows and things like that you could use behind your tractors.

JLL: You always had to hoe the same way, though, that never changed.

I got a blister from hoeing in the garden the other day.

LAL: We also had to put up hay to feed the animals. And when we first were doing it, my brothers were around and you did it on a haystack. You had a big pole and you stacked it up on this big pole. And of course, then came the baling, the square bales, and now they're doing the round bales. Of course, we didn't have anything like those hay balers. It was always up on the pole, and you stacked up like that.

Do you remember where your grandfather got the supplies to farm? The feed, and you said you made your own hay.

JLL: There was a place, it's all changed now road wise, going out Charlotte Highway toward Asheville. There was a place called Farmers Federation. There were places you could get material, and seed, what you needed. I suspect that that must be where they went.

LAL: That's the only place that I can remember them talking about.

JLL: And also, if I remember correctly, it was like a place where you could get advice if you were having an issue with a certain crop, I think, Farmers Federation it was called. I'm not sure about that last statement, but it seems like in my mind that's where they went.

You said that all the family helped. Was there any hired work? Migrant workers or anybody from outside?

JLL: Only neighbors.

LAL: You might have a neighbor you would call to help, but mostly it was family that got together and did.

Do you have any fond memories of the farm? You said that it was good to grow up there. Anything that really sticks out?

JLL: I can always remember how scared I was of the large farm animals. I'm a country girl, but I'm not a lover of farm animals.

LAL: We did things like my aunt had a pony. Janey was on the pony one time and our cousin took a slingshot and slingshot the pony in the rear end and it takes off. It was stuff like that. It was getting up Sunday morning and everybody getting ready for church, and all of a sudden our two oldest brothers would be getting into some kind of little, I don't know what they were arguing about, whatever, all of a sudden one of them would be flying out the door and the other would be behind him with a towel to pop him. There was all kinds of things we did growing up. It was just a good time with all the family. I think that's why we're all so close

today. My brothers and sisters and I, that's how we grew up. Even to this day, getting together, going places and doing things. We enjoyed each other's company.

JLL: In our community, the social life was going to school, and going to church. And there would be this big get together in the field between my dad and his sister, and we'd have a big bonfire and a wienie roast. By today's standards we would probably be considered very poor, very deprived. But it was not that way. Everybody around us was pretty much in the same boat and we just enjoyed it. We enjoyed each other. We enjoyed walking for Halloween. We did a lot of stuff that kids are missing out on today, maybe. It's hard to describe how come we think it was such a good life, but it was.

How many siblings do you all have?

JLL: There are five us in the family. Two girls, and three boys.

Is there anything big that's changed over the years? The roads definitely, and Number Nine. There's more people there.

LAL: There's a lot more people there. The road was paved. Up to a certain point it was paved. And the gentlemen when it got to that point he wasn't going to have the road paved all the way. It was paved actually on up above the house where we lived. Houses put in places that we used to walk across and do squirrel hunting. Or we used to walk across the woods on the hill over there and go down to our grandparents. You can't walk across that property anymore. There are things like all the chinquapin trees are gone because the houses have moved in and taken things down. The crabapple trees, there's not as many crabapple trees, you know you could get that wonderful smell in the spring. There's good things and then there's things that kind of make you sad that you can't smell those crabapples anymore, you can't find those chinquapin trees anymore, you know that sort of thing.

JLL: I don't know if you and Bobby ever did, but did you all have to walk from our house to Emmas Grove Road to catch the school bus?

LAL: We never had to walk to catch the bus, because the bus started coming up Number Nine. When it would pick us up first in the morning time, in the evening time we were the last to get off. And they would let us get off there at the crossroads of number nine, what we call the crossroads, and we could walk home and beat the bus. We never had to walk down to the end of the road to catch the bus.

JLL: Our mother didn't drive, and it didn't matter if it was raining or blowing snow, forty degrees or seventy degrees. You caught the bus at the end of the road. And then you walked. And that's way before girls were allowed to wear pants to school. So, my mother, I dressed in a dress, what you had to wear, supposed to wear, and then I would have to put a pair of pants on in the wintertime. So many people in Fairview were doing the same thing that they actually had a place it was called the cloak room where you hung your coats, your boots whatever, and there was a little place in there where you could put your pants. And probably half the classroom was in the same position. I got over my embarrassment.

Where was the school? Is it still Fairview Elementary?

LAL: Yeah, it's changed a whole lot.

JLL: And I actually went to school, well, you did too, no you went to middle school

LAL: I went through eighth grade at Fairview Elementary and then to the high school

At Reynolds. **Me too but not till eighth grade**. **I think I'm the fourth generation of people that went to Reynolds. And I guess you all went to the middle school now as the high school. That's what my grandpa did. I guess most people around you farmed, too.**

JLL: Most did. My dad's sister Iris Lanning Curry was a schoolteacher and my Aunt Marie his other sister mostly worked in a manufacturing plant.

LAL: Mostly worked at what used to be CP Clare.

JLL: As far as our early growing up years everybody was pretty much farming.

Can you tell any stories or legends about parts of Fairview?

JLL: I can't come up with one right now.

LAL: I can't think of anything off the top of my head. [pause] I can remember being on the party line on the phone and getting in trouble for listening in and/or playing on the phone and the operator calling back and telling your parents you were playing on the phone. I don't really remember anything about any legends in Fairview.

JLL: Our dad scared us to death on Halloween. He said to be careful of what was that cat?

LAL: Wampus cats and the headless horseman and laughing hyenas.

JLL: We heard it every year, but we were scared every year. Because as I said we did walk. This is true, this is not a legend. I don't know if it's of interest or not. Out aunt, not our aunt, Emma Lanning donated the land for Emmas Grove Baptist Church. And I've never really thought to look her up in that book. That's from our personal family, and actually we still go to Emmas Grove Baptist.

So did you start going once she donated the land, or did you always go there.

JLL: Well the church was built in the late 1800s. I reckon that's where I've always been.

LAL: We just celebrated the 117th anniversary at the church. So, we've been going, I've been going all my life.

So, your whole family went. What stuck out about the church? What were the pastors, and the congregation, and the church community like?

JLL: Our church has always been, as long as I can remember, has always been a church that loves to sing, lots of music in our church. I was married at Emmas Grove. M. L. Kirstein was the pastor at that time and he did a ceremony. I can't remember, I know the names of some of the former pastors. Lou Ann is the pianist at our church right now.

LAL: Our dad was the psalm reader at the church for years, and his mother and sisters sang too and so we've always been a musical family. There was M. L. Kirstein and John Newcombe, that was his name, was the pastor there, there was Bill Jenkins, Dan Robinson, you know we had the ones who preached the hellfire brimstone and you kind of get the ones who still preach the word but are not as what we call the screamers. You know, that type of folk. We had those. We always had good pastors who wanted the church to grow. I've got great memories of some older women in our church who taught Sunday School, Bible School, who could stand up and pray and you felt they were right in God's face speaking right to him. Things that we did in Bible School

JLL: All that memorizing, whoo!

LAL: The memorizing, the Bible verses, we had a wonderful church family and some of the best food and cooks you could ever imagine in the church, and the men too, the men were good men who were family oriented and church oriented and just wanted the best for everybody in the community. It was good, and it still is good. A lot of these people have gone on but you still have that memory of growing up and being around those people.

Is there any other ways you guys were involved in the community growing up other than the church? Any other volunteer groups or anything?

JLL: Mother was for a long time a member of the Fairview Ladies Auxiliary at the Fire Department. Our dad was on the board.

LAL: Basically, when we were growing up all we had was school and church, we didn't have a lot. I can remember when 4-H kind of started in the community, kind of got started by the Carters, and so that was something we delved a little bit into. Our problem was that our mother did not drive and our dad worked and because he worked at the bread company he had to be a work four or five o'clock in the morning. Sometimes he didn't get home till seven eight o'clock at night. So, we didn't always have transportation. We all took piano lessons. Pretty much every kid in the community took piano lessons and we walked from our home down Emmas Grove Road to the music teacher's house to take lessons. That's one thing we did. Like I said, we played ball in the front yard, and stuff like that and that's pretty much what we did.

You mentioned Halloween. Were they any other celebrations, big things that you would do with neighbors and family as well?

JLL: Probably every four to six weeks there was something, whether it would be just a meal, a huge meal or a wienie roast, that's what we called them back then

LAL: We did those a lot with all the church family, we would do a bonfire, we would roast hot dogs and marshmallows. We didn't have s'mores back then

JLL: And there were families that our dad worked with, came and our family all came, church family came. So, there was a lot to do. But as far as seeing each other, our age, other than family, it was basically church and school.

How would you get news about what was going on? Was there a newspaper, or you said you listened on the phone?

LAL: That's where you heard the gossip, that's where you heard the good juicy stuff. I can remember getting the newspaper.

JLL: And then we had tv.

LAL: We had tv but I was up in years, six, seven years old, something like that before we had our first tv. We had radio. We really didn't know a whole lot about what was going on in the world, to be frankly honest with you.

JLL: We didn't. I'm sure our parents were more aware. We would be upstairs, going to sleep on a Sunday or Saturday, I'm not sure which it was, we could hear mother and daddy listening to the radio. There were certain programs on, I can't remember the names of them. Anyhow, you could hear the music and everything coming upstairs. I think Dad went out every day, except the weekend, Sunday, the only time he was really home. Other than at night. We had newspapers, I remember that. We had the catalog we could look at.

LAL: The Sears catalog, that was always the best thing to look at, especially the Christmas catalog. Big old thick thing come in the, get you to pick it up or it come. I can remember going downtown to shop in Asheville. Our mother would need to go shopping, and we didn't go shopping a lot, it was only maybe toward Christmas time, or we needed school clothes, that type of thing. I can remember going downtown and her leaving us at the movie theatre. And we'd go in and sit through the movie two or three times. You could do it back then. While she went and did her shopping and she'd say 'Ok I'll meet you back here at such and such a time.' And we thought that was the grandest time that'd ever been

JLL: By the same token, the lady who worked at the theatre was a friend of my mother's sister who lived in town, so she felt comfortable doing that. Of course, back then you really didn't give it a second thought. We didn't have a lot of danger in our life, I guess you would say.

Was the theatre downtown?

JLL: It was called the Plaza. Right up at Pack Square. A big deal would be to get to go to the S&W cafeteria downtown. I thought that was a very ornate, rich place to go.

Is that the one that's on

I can't think of what that's on

It's a really pretty building

Yeah, it was on College Street

General: Yeah

JLL: That was a big deal

SAL: My dad's mother's sister was a buyer for Bon Marche. We would get to go uptown, especially Janey and I would get to go and that's where she would take us for lunch. That was always a really big thing to get to go visit Aunt Sadie and go to lunch and that was really cool for us.

This is asking about early businesses and grocery stores, early garages and gas stations and stuff you can remember

JLL: As far back as I can remember there was a place called Fairview Supply which is now like a Dickie's. That was the place you could go and I think they had more than just groceries, did they have shoes and stuff? There was a gas station there beside them, and beside the Fairview school, there was a rock, the rock building is still there, I think, and that was it. Was it Sales?

LAL: I can't remember who it was, it was just a little...

JLL: It was a grocery store. There were several, two or three gas stations. There's Howington's grocery store up near, before the dollar store on 74.

LAL: That's where Mother and Daddy did most of their grocery shopping if they had to go out get stuff and that's where you bought gas, they had a gas station there, too. And then there was Wilson's on Old Fort Road. It was a gas station and a grocery store. I can't remember what year it was, but I can remember the first time Bi-Lo's came down on the river, and I think we got an ad in the newspaper about the grand opening type thing, what they were doing and what they had. Mother made us out a list and she made me a list and she made her a list and she made my brother Bobby a list and she sent us in to buy these groceries. And I'd never done anything like this so I'm thinking they're going to think I'm too young to come in here and buy groceries and stuff like that. You know, it was a can of tuna for ten cents. I remember that, coming in the first time or two I ever went to a Bi-Lo's thinking, wow this is amazing, from the little stores that we went into to buy groceries, to the big thing.

How old were you?

LAL: I was not driving yet, but I was probably thirteen, something like that, twelve thirteen fourteen, somewhere along in there.

Do you know anything about quarries or mines?

Sisters: I don't remember anything about any quarries.

What about restaurants. Were there any restaurants around you that you remember other than the downtown ones?

JLL: I think the first restaurant I remember is where Angelo's is now but it was called, it was not the log thing it is now. You remember?

LAL: I remember it being there.

JLL: Fairview restaurant? I'm not sure. That's the first one I remember out here, I could be wrong. But that's the one I remember.

LAL: It was the one before Angelo's. Maybe it was just Fairview Restaurant. The only one of the restaurants I remember going to much was out on Swannanoa River Road. The Red Door?

JLL: The Yellow Door was on Swannanoa River Road.

LAL: But this one was there just right across from the golf course.

JLL: The Big Apple

LAL: The Big Apple. That's it. We ate there.

JLL: But gosh, I was grown. I mean, it probably was there before but...

LAL: And eating up there at the Fairview Restaurant, that's about the only, as far as restaurants go. I can't remember anything being out here.

So we talked about schools. What about parks and playgrounds, just the farm still?

Sisters: The rec park, we'd go swimming. Asheville Rec Park

LAL: Most of the time, though, if we went swimming, we went down here toward Gerton to Chestnut Hills, the swimming pool down there. That's mostly where we sent swimming. We went to the Rec Park occasionally.

JLL: There was a zoo there instead of the nature center. They had some exotic if you will, animals, monkeys, elephants.

LAL: That's pretty much all...

JLL: That's about the only park I remember going to much.

So you said there wasn't much danger, like no crimes really.

JLL: I don't recall. I'm sure there probably was. I never felt threatened whatsoever growing up.

Was there any traumatic events, fire, floods, accidents or anything?

LAL: Our grandfather's sister, was it his sister that was hit, killed by a car?

JLL: That's true.

LAL: I think she was standing on the side of the road maybe or something, was hit by a car and was killed.

JLL: She, they, I don't know why but the story I've heard back way in the day was they would actually stake their cow, I don't mean the side of the road, on the grassy areas around the road, I'm not sure if that's what happened to her or not.

LAL: ...something about that. And she was killed

JLL: I don't remember...

LAL: Wasn't a cousin was killed, South Carolina, in World War Two. You know, this is bits of information that you pick up when you're younger, but you don't really grasp it. I don't remember anything other, really drastic happening when we were kids. No fires, anything like that.

JLL: That sister of his that was killed was Frances Lanning. And she married Fortune Rotella, and they had three children. And her death was October twenty-six of '25. No, that's Roan. Roan Rotella, Mary Rotella and Gregory Rotella were the children.

LAL: Wasn't it Gregory that was killed. And Roan lived with my dad's sister Iris. And he wasn't exactly, I guess what we would have called back in those days retarded somewhat. He couldn't do book learning, school learning, but he could take a car apart and put it back together, that sort of thing. So, he lived with my dad's sister for years until he passed away. It was family taking care of family.

What about doctors and medical, was there any doctor that you all went to?

JLL: There was a Doctor Souther in Fletcher that we went to some. And you heard about the Valley Clinic that was in Bat Cave, North Carolina. We'd go up Hickory Nut and back down.

LAL: Doctor Philip Zulick is the one I remember the most going to see. And it was just a little hospital down there too that he had, I don't know how many beds, our youngest brother was born there. I had the measles and it kind of settled in my left side and I was just having this terrible pain. Long story short I ended up going to see Dr. Zulick. He sent me to a physician in Asheville, but he's the one that found that I had a kidney problem and had to have a kidney removed, when I was in the third grade, or second grade. I saw him for sore throats, poison ivy, we all did, that's where we went, was down to Valley clinic.

JLL: When she had to have that surgery, and you got to come home, you talk about somebody getting all the attention.

LAL: That was traumatic.

JLL: I also had her convinced that she was adopted. She looked just like the rest of us, but she did.

LAL: They were mean to me

Were you the youngest?

LAL: No, I have a brother was youngest, but I was always kind of the sickly one, I always had strep throat, I was always having to be taken to the doctor.

JLL: We had an outing to Ghost Town and who gets sick and we don't get to go, or she has to stay home and we feel bad.

LAL: It's all good.

JLL: Yep.

Were there any inns or boarding houses, anything like that?

JLL: In Fairview?

Yeah

JLL: I don't think so. I don't remember anything

LAL: I don't know if I even remember anybody taking on boarders or anything.

Was there anything you think family members might remember about the war, the depression, any stories?

JLL: Well, I know that we grew up in an era, our mother and dad's era, there was very little that they threw away because they always felt that they would have a need for it later. And that's because I'm sure of the depression. My mother came from a very large family. She was one of thirteen. One died right at birth, I think, is that right?

LAL: One of twelve.

JLL: One of twelve. It was twins, one twin died.

LAL: I don't know if there's anybody really left that remembers much about any of that as far as the family's concerned.

JLL: Gertrude, mother's sister, this is not a Lanning but when she passed away, she had a house over in the historical Montford District, and it was at one time a boardinghouse. Anyhow, we were cleaning out closets upstairs and she would have just stacks of cardboard and things that you have no need for, and that was because the era that she grew up in through the Depression, we assume. She didn't throw anything away. I don't know of anybody who would know much

LAL: Pretty much everybody's gone

Now we can get into anything at all you would like to mention or say, if you have pictures and stuff.

JLL: Well, this was in the *Asheville Citizen-Times* about the house that was on Emmas Grove Road that was then moved to Old Gap Creek Road, and then after they restored it, it burned. It was a log house, and it's just sad. John A. Lanning, it was called the John A. Lanning home, built in 1839, I don't know if that's of any use or not, how they. In this book there's a roster of Revolutionary War people and Lannings, and Civil War. There's a list of the Lanning grooms of early Buncombe County marriages, the Civil war roster again. This is what one person did, researched. I guess you take it with a little grain of salt, the history.

LAL: We've heard all of our life that there were two brothers that came over and one supposedly settled in Henderson County area and one settled in Buncombe County, the Lannings, the two brothers that came over.

Where did they come from?

JLL: I think I can tell you right quick. Let me see. Now this again is from this lady. They say the Lanning name started in England and they came from France with Isabella who was the wife of King Edward II. Then they migrated to New York, New Jersey or New York. New Jersey. The Lanning clan migrated to North Carolina, Joseph Lanning. I really don't know, I've read through some of it. Since they came to North Carolina prior to the Revolutionary War and settled in the Piedmont section of Rowan County, now Davidson County. Joseph Lanning applied for a land grant in 1777 and Salisbury gave him a land grant. It said he was a carpenter. Then it goes on down to how they came up here. Just a lot of stuff. I don't know if you want to scan any of this. But they came from England to here. Another thing in here says that they came, it was also in England, from Wales was where the majority of them were.

That's all useful. Just anything you got

JLL: Page 22, the Revolutionary thing, page 22, I tried to do a little but here I am fiddling. Officials of the Edward Book and Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution announced that they were seeking names and records of men in the Revolutionary War. The James Lanning family of Buncombe County had been holding family reunions for several years. The Lannings in Henderson County had been holding reunions since September whatever. They met by previous agreement in a reunion of the two clans at the Cane Creek Community Center near Tweed's Chapel in 1939. The purpose of this joint reunion was the unveiling of the memorial tablet to patriot John Lanning, the ancestor of the Lannings in western North Carolina. He was a private in the army of the colonies in the war of the American Revolution. There's just a lot of stuff in here, we can't scan this whole book, and I don't know how much, how far you want to go back.

However far. That's cool.

JLL: Let's see about the Civil War. 27, Gardner Lanning was the only member of James Lanning's family who was engaged as a private in any one of the great battles of the Civil War. And then there's excerpts of I guess his letters home. And this is about the early marriages. Our grandfather's father and mother. James Marion Lanning, 1861, Elizabeth Tow 1863. January first, I guess they were married January 1st 1885. That was my grandfather's mother and dad.

So, one of your family members made that all?

JLL: She researched, her name is Lily Lanning. I think she was a sister. Was she a sister of Papaw's?

LAL: I don't know. She might've been.

Because that's really cool.

JLL: Now here's on page 138 Emaline Lanning gave land to the church and cemetery which bear her name at the Emmas Grove Baptist Church in Fairview. She was born in 1831 and died in 1914. That's kind of interesting.

LAL: This is my dad's parents, (our) grandparents. This is Mack Lanning. This is Maude, and this is our parents, Julian and Mary. This was mother's. We knew these, grew up with them. We did not know mother's mother and father the Lytles because she died in childbirth, shortly after childbirth. And then probably within ten years or less, our grandfather passed away. So, she was basically raised by her older siblings. This is a picture of all twelve, eleven of them, this is our mother here.

JLL: I suspect you have that because of Paula Kelly Miller, they took this and scanned it

Oh, the Millers did?

LAL: And you might have this one and this right here. This is the pictures we have of our grandfather and our mother and father.

JLL: Lily Lanning was a sister of our grandfather and she's the one that said: to Julian from Lily – in memory of cousin Mary and my dad and all Lannings.

She wrote a whole book about

LAL: Not sure what's over here, haven't got that far yet.

Well, anything else?

LAL: Wouldn't want to live anywhere else. I like to visit but I don't want to live.

END OF INTERVIEW

Philip Blocklyn, 5 May 2020